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**REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE MASTERS PROGRAMME IN ECONOMICS
FOR ANGLOPHONE AFRICA (EXCEPT NIGERIA)**

OPERATIONAL PLAN

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I. INTRODUCTION

Background

Sub-Saharan Africa's post-independence economic growth and development facilitated a rapid expansion of tertiary education in most countries of the region. Government commitment to a planned approach to economic management signalled a growing demand for well trained economics graduates, and many governments provided support for the creation or expansion of university departments of economics. Since the early 1980s, however, there has been a sharp deterioration in the economic performance of African countries, with adverse consequences for higher education. There has been a stagnation or decline in university budgets in real terms. Yet, at the same time, there has been a rapid growth in student numbers at undergraduate level. Graduate programmes, including for economics, have suffered from this dual pressure.

To date, African governments' economic recovery programmes have rarely been accompanied by a revival of support for training institutions. In particular, post-graduate economics programmes remain weak and under severe strain in most countries, despite the fact that, for successful economic recovery and development, African governments need to recruit new highly-skilled economists and to secure further training for insufficiently qualified economists already in the civil service.

Throughout the region there has been a serious deterioration in the quality of training that economics departments have been able to provide. Understaffing is generally acute, with a student/teacher ratio (in terms of "full-time student equivalents") often as high as 50 to one. Staff morale is low and many teaching posts are vacant, invariably because of low and declining real salaries. Poor infrastructure, notably the shortage of computer facilities and decaying libraries with insufficient books and few up-to-date journals, have contributed to the decline in the quality of training. Difficulties in attracting and retaining the more senior academic staff, notably at the senior lecturer level and above, and the heavy teaching loads at undergraduate level have undermined post-graduate programmes, and in some cases forced economics departments to abandon them. In recent years, outside Nigeria, as few as seven universities in the whole of anglophone Africa have been able to operate some type of post-graduate programme in economics.

Genesis of the plan

Early in 1989, African economists working in a research network sponsored by the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) began to focus attention on the crisis facing post-graduate economics training. AERC set up a task-force of heads of economics departments, which held a series of meetings and commissioned several in-depth studies.

After a first round of diagnostic studies¹, AERC in conjunction with the department heads proceeded to undertake separate studies to propose strategies for post-graduate economics training in three zones: anglophone Africa except Nigeria, francophone Africa and Nigeria, a zone of its own because of its large and diverse system of higher education, including over 30 universities. Following the completion of two studies focusing on anglophone Africa except Nigeria², the AERC Board decided at a special meeting in September 1990 to proceed with detailed planning in 1991 for a programme to strengthen masters training in this zone. The Board also decided that AERC would assist the Nigerian and Francophone African economics departments to undertake similar planning for their zones, and to explore the feasibility of a programme for overseas PhD training for economics department staff. The Board's decisions were subsequently reflected in the Programme of Work and Budget implemented by the AERC in 1991.

¹ Ibi S. Ajayi, H.J. Pegatienan and Mohammed S. Mukras, Graduate Training in Economics for Africans: A Joint Report, AERC Special Paper No. 5, Nairobi, February 1990; Ibi S. Ajayi, Graduate Training in Economics in Nigeria and Ghana, AERC Special Paper No. 6, Nairobi, February 1990; J.H. Pegatienan, Graduate Training in Economics in Francophone West and Central Africa, AERC Special Paper No. 7, Nairobi, February 1990; Mohammed S. Mukras, The State of Graduate Training in Economics in Eastern and Southern Africa, AERC Special Paper No. 8, Nairobi, February 1990.

² Jeffrey C. Fine, A Strategy for Graduate Training in Economics for Africans, AERC Special Paper No. 9, Nairobi, August 1990; Mohammed S. Mukras, Graduate Training in Economics in Anglophone Africa (except Nigeria), AERC Special Paper No. 10, Nairobi, February 1991.

Strategic framework

The studies and meetings conducted between 1989 and 1991 resulted in a consensus on the strategic framework for a programme to strengthen post-graduate economics training in Anglophone Africa. The following are the principal strategic concepts and guidelines on which the design of the programme has been based.

(i) **Focus on MA training**

Priority has been given to masters' level training, for two main reasons. The first is its critical importance for the supply to government of high-calibre, technically proficient economic managers and policy analysts. It is now widely accepted that undergraduate training does not provide a sufficient grounding in theory and skills to meet the on-the-job needs of the government economist. Second, the masters degree provides an essential foundation for doctoral training, which is especially important for those expected to pursue a career in university teaching and research. Potentially, economics masters programmes in African universities can deliver high-quality training that will be more immediately pertinent to the needs of African economies than that provided by overseas institutions.

(ii) Strengthening university economics departments

The institutions that are most appropriate for the delivery of economics masters programmes are the economics departments of the region's universities, rather than regional centers outside the university system. Strong masters programmes, combined with staff development measures, will help strengthen departments' broader teaching and research capacity and over time benefit undergraduate programmes too.

(iii) The importance of quality

Quality programmes that meet international professional standards are important not only intrinsically, but also to build up local support and lay the basis for long-term sustainability. Programmes must be competitive in terms of quality, as well as cost, or governments will prefer to continue sending current and prospective employees abroad for advanced training in economics. The regional programme outlined in this plan will help enhance quality through course and textbook development, the regular monitoring of performance in participating university departments of economics, and high performance requirements for continuing assistance under the programme.

(iv) Regional collaboration

The masters programmes in African universities' economics departments can be strengthened through a judicious blend of regional, inter-university collaboration and external assistance. Collaboration among economics departments can help rationalise the use of scarce resources, achieve economies of scale, reduce departments' isolation and foster intellectual exchange, and thereby help improve the quality of education. Collaboration can build on and extend traditional links among African universities, and contribute to wider efforts towards African regional integration. Specifically, the regional programme provides for collaboration in course and textbook development, external examining, joint thesis supervision, the pooling of resources for the teaching of electives, and the placement of students from universities or countries which do not have economics MA programmes in those that do.

(v) Inclusive participation

All university departments of economics in Anglophone Africa except Nigeria may participate in the collaborative regional programme. All departments which do not currently offer their own masters degrees under the regional collaborative programme (Category A participants) will be fully

represented in the governing structures of the programme. They will also be able to participate in and benefit from many of components of the programme, including the provision of scholarships for their students to enrol in participating departments with recognised masters programmes (Category B participants).

(vi) Flexibility

Though the demands of high quality and inter-university collaboration require some standardisation in the structure and content of participating departments' economics masters programmes, there must be room for flexibility in order to take into account differences in national needs, departments' special strengths and university rules and regulations.

(vii) Close ties among university, government and private sector

Through the establishment of national liaison committees, with a broad membership comprising representatives of the appropriate university bodies, key government ministries and the private sector, a framework can be created for the flow of information and the exchange of ideas between the producers and the consumers of the output of economics masters

programmes. Such a framework can help ensure that the programmes are relevant and of high quality. They can also help build up local support for the programmes, notably through scholarship and sponsorship schemes and the adoption of supportive government policies.

(viii) External support

The departments of economics participating in this programme will require external assistance during an initial period of at least five years, while investments are made to improve the quality and output of masters graduates. In the longer term, the employers of these graduates, mainly governments and to some extent the private sector, are expected gradually to increase their support so that high-quality programmes can be sustained as external assistance is phased out. Continued long-term donor support will be required, however, for the regional collaborative aspects of the programme.

Objectives

The main aim of the collaborative programme is to develop economics masters programmes in Africa that meet international standards, are relevant to African needs

and can eventually be sustained from local resources. Specifically, the programme is intended to meet the following two objectives:

- (i) to train economists in advanced theory and methods, mainly for policy analysis and economic management within government, but also for employment in the private sector and universities;
- (2) to provide the foundations for a smaller number who can subsequently undertake more advanced study at the doctoral level, mainly for employment in universities and research institutes.

In this framework, the programme is intended to strengthen the teaching and research capacity of university departments of economics, and also to reduce the need for African countries to purchase training abroad when services of comparable quality can potentially be provided at home at reasonable cost.

Practical preparations for the regional collaborative masters programme are to begin in December 1991, to permit the first intake of students under the programme in the 1992/93 academic year, i.e. in October 1992. The programme is to be complemented by a separate PhD fellowship programme, to meet the staff development needs of economics departments.

II. PROGRAMME COMPONENTS

The regional collaborative masters programme is designed to provide the student with a thorough grounding in economic theory and methods, as the foundation for specialisation. This will take into account recent developments in theory and methods, as well as the particular circumstances of African economies.

The masters degree programmes to be supported by the regional collaborative programme will be of 18-24 months duration. They will include three components, namely core courses, elective courses and a thesis or research paper.

Core courses

The compulsory courses required by the current masters programmes in the region differ somewhat from university to university. They all, however, include courses in macroeconomics, microeconomics and quantitative methods (mathematics, statistics and econometrics). The consensus view of the task-force of department heads is that these three subjects provide the foundation of advanced training in economics and are indispensable for subsequent specialisation.

All university departments participating in the collaborative programme are therefore expected to teach high-quality, advanced core courses in these three subjects. This does not preclude a department teaching one or more other compulsory courses, as long as the three courses in macroeconomics, microeconomics and quantitative methods are properly taught.

While adequate coverage of these subjects requires the teaching of a commonly agreed corpus of essential theory and methods, these courses can include supplementary material that will vary from university to university. The common requirements will be drawn up on a collaborative basis.

The core courses must be completed by early June in the first year because of the collaborative arrangements for the teaching of the elective courses, which are outlined below. The core courses will be examined by the participating department no later than the first half of June. The collaborative programme will agree on procedures for the assessment and reporting of results and will appoint and contract external examiners with the approval of the university authorities.

Electives

The preliminary studies on post-graduate training revealed that one major bottleneck in all economics departments with masters programmes has been the difficulty

of mounting a reasonable choice of elective courses. The task-force of department heads proposed that the most effective way of resolving this problem would be to pool resources by teaching electives in a joint facility. Such a facility makes it practical to offer a significantly larger number of electives than is possible in any one department, and to recruit outstanding scholars from the region and overseas to teach these courses. One other major benefit is the synergy created by bringing together students and teachers from several universities for a concentrated period of intensive instruction.

These elective courses will be taught by teaching teams, normally comprising three lecturers, headed by a course leader. Each course leader, in conjunction with the members of his or her teaching team, will be responsible for designing a draft curriculum and proposing course materials for approval by the collaborating group of economics departments, as well as for drafting examination questions.

In view of the expected number of students from participating universities (see page 27), the Joint Facility for Electives (JFE) will be able to offer eight elective courses in the first year of the collaborative programme and ten courses thereafter. In order to maximise the advantages of the facility, each student will be required to take two electives at the JFE. As with the core courses, this requirement does not preclude participating universities offering additional electives of their own, if they have the resources to do so. Students will only attend the JFE if they have at least a provisional pass in their core course examinations. Students who have failed one or more of their

core courses may attend the JFE in the subsequent year if they pass supplementary examinations for the core courses.

The electives will be taught at the JFE over a period of three months in each year, from the beginning of July to the end of September. Courses, will be run for twelve weeks, and the courses will be examined in the final twelfth week. Arrangements will be made for the evaluation of the electives by students and teaching staff at the end of each session of the JFE.

The collaborative programme will set the examinations for the JFE courses, appoint the examiners (the course teachers and external examiners) and approve the examination results (according to procedures set out in Section III of this plan). The collaborative programme will also set supplementary examinations for the JFE courses, and will permit students to sit these examinations at their home universities. The collaborative programme, however, will not provide funding for a student to repeat courses at the JFE. These too will be marked by the teachers of the JFE courses, vetted by external examiners and approved by the collaborative programme. Participating universities will be required to make provision to give accreditation to the JFE electives and examinations as part of their degree programmes.

Theses or research papers

Students will commence work on their thesis or research paper, and will be eligible for a research grant (see Section VI) upon satisfactory completion of their core and elective courses. The department head may use his or her discretion subject to University regulations in allowing a student to begin the thesis or research paper and receive a research grant in cases where the student has passed the core courses but was unable to take the JFE courses or JFE examinations for exceptional reasons, such as illness, and needs to commence research prior to attending the following year's session of the JFE. The duration for preparation and presentation of the thesis or research paper will be from six to twelve months, according to the regulations of the participating university. The collaborative programme will help identify and arrange the appointment of external joint supervisors where desired and external examiners for theses and research papers.

III. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

A representative body of the participating departments of economics, known as the Academic Board, will be responsible for the management of all academic aspects of the collaborative masters programme. The Secretariat of the AERC will act as executing agency for an interim period, with responsibility for all administrative and financial matters relating to the programme.

Academic Board

The Academic Board will be composed of one representative of each participating university -- either the head of the economics department or, in his or her absence, a designate who could fully represent the Department of Economics. The AERC's training coordinator and masters programme manager shall attend meetings of the Academic Board and its committees as non-voting members. The Academic Board shall appoint a chairman and a vice-chairman from among its members. The AERC masters programme manager shall serve as secretary to the Board.

During the start-up of the programme, the Board shall meet at least twice in each academic year. Every year from 1993 it shall meet no later than one month after the ending of the annual JFE session, for a review of performance in the core courses and electives (and of thesis performance from 1994), for a general review of programme performance and for the approval of the JFE examination results prior to their official announcement and communication to the students' home universities.

As the governing body for all academic matters concerning the collaborative programme, the Academic Board will be responsible *inter alia* for the following functions:

- approval of the common curricular requirements for the core courses;
- the appointment of external examiners for the core courses and approval of their terms of reference;

- approval of the menu of elective courses, including their course descriptions, from which each year's set of JFE courses is chosen;
- the appointment of examiners for the JFE;
- approval of the JFE examination results;
- approval of recommendations for the development of textbooks and other instructional materials;
- the periodic review of the quality of the programme and the performance of participating departments;
- oversight of the masters scholarship scheme.

The Academic Board shall select five of its members, including the chairman and vice-chairman, plus the *ex officio* secretary, to constitute an Executive Committee, to which it may delegate responsibilities. The Executive Committee shall normally approve the results of the supplementary examinations for the JFE courses, within one month of these examinations being held.

The Academic Board may also delegate responsibility for various functions to specialised committees. Four standing committees shall be established: the Committee on Core Courses, the Committee on Electives, the Committee on Programme Evaluation and the Committee on Professional Development. The Academic Board shall determine the membership of these committees. There shall also be a Panel for Scholarships and Placement, comprising the heads of all Category B departments, i.e. the "receiving" departments, and three outside experts selected by the Academic Board. As secretary

to the Academic Board, the masters programme manager shall attend meetings of all committees and the Panel for Scholarships and Placement as a non-voting member. The Academic Board or its committees may, as necessary, appoint working groups of experts.

Committee on Core Courses

The Committee on Core Courses will be responsible for recommending to the Academic Board the common curricular requirements for the core courses, as well as reading lists for each of these courses. It will also make recommendations to the Academic Board for the development of textbooks and other instructional materials for the core courses. In its preparations for the first academic year of the collaborative programme, the Committee will establish three working groups, composed of two experts each, to draft recommendations for the minimum curricular requirements for each of the core courses, and will organise a workshop of department staff members currently teaching courses in these subjects to consider the draft recommendations prior to their submission to the Academic Board for approval.

Beginning in the second academic year of the collaborative programme, the Committee on Core Courses will hold workshops on the development of suitable teaching materials for each of the core courses, with a view to the eventual publication of such materials.

Committee on Electives

Prior to the first academic year of the collaborative programme, the Committee on Electives will recommend to the Academic Board a comprehensive menu of possible elective courses, based on the suggestions of the participating departments of economics. Once approved by the Academic Board, this menu of electives, with their course outlines, shall be submitted to the appropriate authorities of each university for formal approval. Following the completion of this initial procedure, the Committee will recommend each year to the Academic Board a selection of courses from this menu to be offered in the next session of the JFE. This plan currently provides for eight electives in the first academic year and ten thereafter. The Committee will select the course leaders for each elective, give terms of reference to the course leaders for the design of each elective, and approve the team teachers and curricula proposed by the course leaders. It will also review, in conjunction with the AERC training coordinator and masters programme manager, the practical arrangements for the JFE.

Committee on Programme Evaluation

The Committee on Programme Evaluation will assure the regular monitoring of performance on behalf of the Academic Board. It will appoint and set terms of reference for the external examiners of the core courses and electives, and more generally set up procedures for evaluation and reports, and review participating departments'

performance in the light of the external examiners' reports. It will likewise appoint the examiners for the electives taught in the JFE and review the performance of the JFE, taking into account the examination results and the evaluations by students and teaching staff.

Committee on Professional and Institutional Development

The collaborative programme introduces a number of innovations to increase the rewards of a university teaching career in economics, partly with a view to improving incentives and stemming attrition. These include the following new professional and pecuniary opportunities for teachers: (1) to lecture in their areas of specialisation at the JFE to a broad spectrum of students; (2) to engage in joint supervision of theses; (3) to act as external examiners; (4) to participate in the development of course curricula and teaching materials; and (5) to teach in other participating universities. The Committee on Professional and Institutional Development will explore additional avenues for increasing the rewards of a university teaching career in economics, in the current adverse conditions of heavy teaching loads and poor material conditions, and it will report its recommendations to the Academic Board. The Committee will also recommend to the Academic Board other forms of specific support to the participating departments.

Panel for Scholarships and Placement

The Panel for Scholarships and Placement will award scholarships for students from Category A universities and help place them in the masters programmes of Category B universities. Applicants for these awards must be nominated by the heads of the economics departments of their universities, and the awards will give priority to candidates nominated for staff development. Scholarships will be awarded on a competitive basis, taking into account the staff development needs of the departments without masters programmes. Detailed application procedures and selection criteria will be determined by the Academic Board.

As noted above, the Panel for Scholarships and Placement will be constituted by the heads of the Category B departments and three outside experts approved by the Academic Board. This panel will meet once a year to award the scholarships and to place the winners in receiving departments, according to the availability of places and the preferences indicated in scholarship candidates' applications.

AERC Secretariat

The AERC Secretariat will be responsible for all aspects of the administration and financial management of the programme, including the awarding of grants to participating departments of economics. For the efficient execution of these

responsibilities, the AERC will engage the following staff: a training coordinator, a Masters degree manager, a grants administrator and a secretary. In addition, the programme will draw upon the following common staff of the AERC: a business manager, office manager, accountant, meetings and travel coordinator, documentalist, publications officer and other support staff.

Liaison Committees

Each department of economics with a masters programme participating in the regional collaborative programme will be required to establish a liaison committee, involving representatives of government, the university and the private sector. Where a country has more than one university, this could take the form of a national liaison committee.

The purpose of such committees is to create a framework for the flow of information and exchange of ideas among institutions with an interest in the development of a strong masters programme in economics. Such committees will typically be composed of the head of the economics department, the departmental director of graduate studies, senior university officials, representatives of the Ministry of Education, key economic ministries and the central bank, and officials of representative private sector bodies such as chambers of commerce and manufacturers' associations.

The liaison committee should monitor the content of the department's masters programme and the performance of its students, with a view to ensuring that the programme is of high quality and responds to national needs. The committee should discuss ways of building up local support for the programme, for example through scholarships and sponsorship by ministries and the private sector, and address policy issues which may have a bearing on the success of the masters programme. It should also discuss and coordinate donor support for the programme.

IV. PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAMME

Categories of participation

As already stated in Section One of this plan, there are two categories of participants: first, departments of economics which do not currently offer masters programmes fulfilling the requirement of the regional collaborative programme (Category A participants) and, second, economics departments which do have such programmes (Category B participants). Classification of a department in either category is not permanent. A department can move from Category A to Category B, or vice-versa.

All departments in both categories are fully represented in the Academic Board and are eligible to serve on its committees. Staff members from departments in both

categories may be selected to serve as members of working groups, as teachers of electives in the JFE, as external examiners and as external (joint) thesis supervisors. In addition, Category A departments may nominate candidates for scholarships for enrolment in the masters programmes of Category B departments. Category B departments will be eligible for grants to strengthen their masters programmes. These grants will provide modest support for start-up costs and operating costs for the core courses and thesis research.

Requirements and Procedures for Category B

To qualify for Category B status, a participating department of economics must meet the following requirements:

- teach the three core courses adequately, covering the curricular requirements approved by the Academic Board;
- accredit external examiners for the core courses and adhere to the evaluation procedures set for the core courses;
- send all masters students to the JFE for two electives;
- secure official university recognition of the electives and exams in the JFE;
- reserve a minimum number of places in the masters programme for Category A students with AERC scholarships (one place out of a total of less than ten places or two places out of a total of ten or more places);

- set up a liaison committee with members from the university, government and the private sector;
- where necessary, secure the commitment of the appropriate university or government authorities to insulate the masters programme from disruptive pressures, such as a too heavy teaching load at the undergraduate level.

For Category B status, a department of economics will be required to submit to AERC's training coordinator an operational plan for its masters programme, endorsed by the responsible university authorities. This should include the following components:

- (1) an outline of the department's masters programme;
- (2) the projected intake of masters students for the following five academic years;
- (3) the department's provisions for adequate coverage of the three core courses and its capacity to supervise theses;
- (4) the projected availability of scholarships and sponsorship of masters students;
- (5) an assessment of the consistency of the projections for the masters programme with the expected size of the undergraduate programme and the department's teaching resources;
- (6) information on steps taken or planned to set up liaison committee with government and the private sector;
- (7) capacity to receive students from Category A universities in the coming year;
- (8) a budget for start-up costs (for first time applicants);
- (9) a budget for an operational subsidy for the coming academic year;
- (10) information on other sources of support.

Each year, departments of economics seeking support for their masters programme in the following academic year will submit their operational plans to the AERC training coordinator. The Secretariat will allocate funds on the basis of the resources available for that year and its assessment of each department's needs and capabilities, in relation to the guidelines and objectives recommended by the Academic Board.

The Committee on Programme Evaluation will provide for the monitoring of participating masters programmes, notably through the reports of the external examiners, to determine whether they are meeting performance standards, according to criteria set by the Academic Board. Serious teaching defects are likely to be indicated by poor performance of students in the core course exams. There would also be reasonable cause for concern if students from a particular university performed poorly in the JFE or failed to complete their theses satisfactorily within the allotted period.

In such cases, the AERC training coordinator will initiate an independent review to determine whether the department can rectify the poor performance of its masters programme within a short period. Should the review conclude to the contrary, the department's Category B status shall be suspended. In this eventuality, the department will remain a participant in the Academic Board and remain eligible to participate in other aspects of the programme. It will also remain eligible for PhD fellowships for staff development under the AERC PhD fellowship scheme. It will retain the right to request a resumption of assistance for its masters programme at a later date, after resolving the problems that have caused the poor performance.

Projected Student Numbers

Because of the initially weak state of most economics departments in the region, output from the programme will remain less than the demand for highly trained economists. Priority will be placed on laying a solid foundation for a high quality programme, both as an important goal in itself and because high quality will be critical for its credibility and long-term sustainability.

In the first academic year, access to Category B status will be more selective than in subsequent years, in view of the experimental nature of the programme and the likelihood that some donor commitments will not be disbursed in time for the first year.

Nonetheless, over time there will be a significant increase in the total intake of economics masters students. In the zone as a whole, student intake is expected to rise from a little over 60 a year in 1990/91 and 1991/92 to 70 in the first year of the programme (1992/93) and 100 in the second year (1993/94). Intake is projected to rise to 125 by the fifth year (1996/97).

Economics MA Students in Anglophone Africa except Nigeria
(academic years beginning September/October)

	<u>Actual</u>		<u>Projected¹</u>					
	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>
Total intake	62	63	70	100	110	120	125	...
Intake from Category A universities	17	25	28	30	31	...
JFE enrolment ²	-	-	67	95	105	114	119	...
Total output ³	38 ⁴	55 ⁵	55	58	83	91	100	104

1. Participating in collaborative programme. 2. Assuming 5% attrition before JFE. 3. 83% success rate. 4. Estimate. 5. Projected.

Output of economics masters graduates is expected to rise from about 55 a year at present to 104 in the fifth year of the programme. This assumes an attrition rate of 17 per cent. This is less than in the past, but a high success rate is expected because of the substantial support to be made available through the collaborative programme. An attrition rate of more than 20 per cent would be cause for concern.

Scholarships for Students from Category A Universities

As noted in Section Four, Category B universities, as part of their commitment to the regional collaborative programme, will be required to reserve a minimum number of places for scholarship holders from Category A universities. This minimum shall be two for departments with a total intake of ten or more masters students, and one for

departments with a total intake of less than ten. The programme will aim to provide a total number of scholarships equivalent to 25 per cent of the projected total intake of masters students in Category B departments.

V. CALENDAR FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Practical preparations for the regional collaborative masters programme are to start in December 1991, with the first meeting of the Academic Board. Two calendars for programme implementation are presented in this section: first, a calendar for the two years from December 1991 to December 1993, during which time there will be a number of start-up procedures and activities that will not recur on an annual basis; and second, a calendar of recurrent annual activities for subsequent years.

Calendar for December 1991 - December 1993

The calendar for the start-up period is presented in seven parts, detailing seven streams of activities in the programme: meetings of the Academic Board and Executive Committee, the core courses, the elective courses, programme evaluation, scholarships and placement, administration and grants.

Academic Board and Executive Committee

- December 1991 First meeting of Academic Board:
- elects officers and Executive Committee;
 - elects Committees on Core Courses, Electives, Programme Evaluation and Professional Development;
 - nominates outside experts to serve on the Panel on Scholarships and Placement.
- February 1992 Second meeting of Academic Board:
- adopts rules of procedure;
 - approves minimum curricular requirements for core courses;
 - approves terms of reference for external examiners for core courses and for JFE examiners;
 - approves prospective list of external examiners for core courses;
 - approves menu of 20 electives with course descriptions;
 - approves terms of reference for JFE course leaders;
 - approves selection criteria and application procedures for scholar-ships.
- December 1992 Third meeting of Academic Board:
- receives and discusses progress reports from AERC Secretariat and Committees on Core Courses, Electives, Programme Evaluation, and Scholarships and Placement.
- March 1993 Fourth meeting of Academic Board:
- receives and discusses progress reports from AERC Secretariat and Committees on Core Courses, Electives, Programme Evaluation, and Scholarships and Placement.
- October 1993 Fifth meeting of Academic Board:
- receives and discusses reports from AERC Secretariat and Committees on Core Courses, Electives, Programme Evaluation, and Scholarships and Placement;
 - approves JFE examination results;
 - reviews core course results;
 - reviews overall programme performance.

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| December 1993 | Meeting of Executive Committee:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - approves results of JFE supplementary examinations. |
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Core courses

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| December 1991 | Committee on Core Courses set up by Academic Board. |
| December 1991 | First meeting of Committee on Core Courses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - selects chairman of committee; - adopts terms of reference for Working Groups on macroeconomics, micro-economics and quantitative methods; - suggests names of members of Working Groups. |
| December 1991 | Participating departments send outlines of all existing core courses, with reading lists; Secretariat contracts members of Working Groups. |
| January - February 1992 | Working Groups submit draft recommendations for minimum curricular requirements and reading lists of core courses. Nomination of External Examiners. |
| February 1992 | Workshop on core courses, involving members of Committee on Core Courses, members of Working Groups and current teachers of core courses, to discuss Working Groups' recommendations. |
| February 1992 | Academic Board discusses and adopts minimum curricular requirements for core courses. |
| March-May 1992 | AERC Secretariat sets up systems for supply of course materials, including negotiations with publishers on bulk purchases. |
| June 1992 | Departments in conjunction with AERC Secretariat place orders for course materials. |
| Oct 1992-May 1993 | Teaching of core courses. |

December 1992	Committee on Core Courses makes progress report to Academic Board.
November 1993	Workshops on development of course materials.

Electives

December 1991	Committee on Electives set up by Academic Board; Committee holds inaugural meeting and selects chairman.
December 1991	Participating departments send to AERC Secretariat lists of all their approved electives, with course descriptions, plus information on which electives are currently being offered and a ranked list of electives they would like included in the menu of JFE courses.
January 1992	Secretariat forwards above documentation to chairman of Committee on Electives, for preparation of second meeting of the Committee on Electives.
February 1992	Second meeting of Committee on Electives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recommends courses to be included in menu of electives; - drafts course descriptions for electives; - drafts terms of reference for course leaders.
February 1992	Academic Board approves menu of electives and their course descriptions, and approves terms of reference for course leaders.
March-Oct 1992	University authorities approve menu of electives and principle of examination within JFE.
October 1992	Poll of all first year masters students to rank their preferred electives for July-September 1993 JFE.
November 1992	Third meeting of Committee on Electives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - determines list of eight electives for July-September 1993 JFE, based on student poll; - proposes course leaders and teachers for July-September 1993 JFE;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reviews practical arrangements for July-September 1993 JFE.
Nov-Dec 1992	Secretariat contracts course leaders and teachers for July-September 1993 JFE.
December 1992	Committee on Electives makes progress report to Academic Board.
Jan-March 1993	JFE course leaders, in conjunction with teachers on their teams, design outlines of electives, draw up lists of course materials, and draft examination questions, for submission to AERC Secretariat.
March-June 1993	AERC Secretariat sends draft JFE examination questions for review by examiners, and arranges for printing of examination questions and procurement of JFE course materials.
July-Sept 1993	Elective courses taught and examined at JFE.

Programme Evaluation

December 1991	Committee on Programme Evaluation set up by Academic Board; holds inaugural meeting and selects chairman.
November 1992	<p>Second meeting of Committee on Programme Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - drafts terms of reference for external examiners for core courses and JFE courses; - recommends list of prospective external examiners for core courses.
December 1992	Academic Board approves terms of reference for external examiners for core courses and JFE courses, and list of prospective external examiners for core courses.
January 1993	AERC Secretariat writes to proposed external examiners for core courses.

February 1993	Category B departments send draft examination questions and course outlines for core courses to external examiners.
March 1993	Deadline for external examiners to approve examination questions for core courses.
Early May 1993	Core course examinations.
Early June 1993	Core course examination results are communicated by department heads to AERC Secretariat (following official approval of examination results by university Academic Committees).
July 1993	Supplementary examinations for core courses.
August-Sept 1993	Supplementary core course examination results are communicated to AERC Secretariat (following official approval of results by university Academic Committees).
End Sept 1993	JFE examinations and marking.
October 1993	Third meeting of Committee on Programme Evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reviews JFE examination results; - reviews core course examination results; - reviews overall programme performance.
October 1993	Committee on Programme Evaluation communicates examination results and programme performance review to Academic Board. Academic Board reviews examination results for core courses and JFE courses and overall programme performance.
October 1993	AERC Secretariat communicates JFE examination results to university administrations.
November 1993	Supplementary examinations for JFE courses.
December 1993	Executive Committee of Academic Board approves supplementary examination results for JFE courses. AERC Secretariat communicates results to university administrations.

Scholarships and Placement

April 1992	Participating departments submit operational plans for Category B status to AERC Secretariat, including numbers of places reserved for AERC scholarship students.
July 1992	Category A departments nominate candidates for scholarships.
July 1992	Undergraduate examination results.
August 1992	Meeting of Committee on Scholarships and Placement: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- awards scholarships;- places scholarship winners.
October 1992	Scholarship holders enrol in Category B universities.

Administration

March-April 1992	AERC Training Division acquires additional office space and staff.
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Grants

Mid-April 1992	Deadline for submission of operational plans by departments seeking Category B status.
May-June 1992	Disbursement of start-up and operating grants.

Annual Calendar from 1993/94

From the 1993/94 academic year, implementation of the programme settles into a simpler and more regular pattern, in which the principal activities are as follows:

October-May	Teaching of core courses.
October	Poll of all first year masters students to rank their preferred electives for next JFE.
October	Meeting of Committee on Programme Evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- reviews previous academic year's JFE examination results;- reviews previous academic year's core course examination results;- (from 1994/95) reviews previous academic year's thesis performance;- reviews overall programme performance.
October	Meeting of Academic Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- receives and discusses reports from AERC Secretariat and Committees on Core Courses, Electives, Programme Evaluation, and Scholarships and Placement;- reviews and approves previous academic year's JFE examination results;- reviews previous academic year's core course results and (from 1994/95) previous year's thesis performance;- reviews overall programme performance.
October	AERC Secretariat communicates JFE examination results to university administrations.
November	Meeting of Committee on Electives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- determines list of ten electives for next JFE, based on student poll;- proposes course leaders and teachers for next JFE;- reviews practical arrangements for next JFE.
November	Supplementary examinations for previous academic year's JFE courses.

Nov-Dec	Secretariat contracts course leaders and teachers for next JFE.
December	Executive Committee of Academic Board approves supplementary examination results for previous academic year's JFE courses. AERC Secretariat communicates results to university administrations.
January	Category B departments send course outlines and draft examination questions for core courses to external examiners.
Jan-March	External examiners approve examination questions for core courses.
Jan-March	JFE course leaders, in conjunction with teachers on their teams, design outlines of electives, draw up lists of course materials, and draft examination questions, for submission to AERC Secretariat.
March	Participating departments submit operational plans for Category B status for following academic year to AERC Secretariat.
March	Meeting of the Academic Board.
March-June	AERC Secretariat sends draft JFE examination questions for review by examiners, and arranges for printing of examination questions and procurement of JFE course materials.
Early May	Core course examinations.
End May	Announcement of start-up and operating grants for following academic year.
Early June	Core course examination results are communicated by department heads to AERC Secretariat (following official approval of examination results by university Academic Committees).
June	Disbursement of start-up and operating grants for following academic year.
June	Departments in conjunction with AERC Secretariat place orders for course materials for following academic year.

July	Supplementary examinations for core courses.
July	Category A departments nominate candidates for scholarships for following academic year.
July-Sept	Elective courses taught and examined at JFE.
August	Meeting of Committee on Scholarships and Placement: - awards scholarships for following academic year; - places scholarship winners.
August-Sept	Supplementary core course examination results are communicated to AERC Secretariat (following official approval of results by university Academic Committees).
End September	JFE examinations and marking.

VI. BUDGET

Expenditure for the programme outlined in this plan covers part of the costs incurred by Category B universities to upgrade the quality of their core courses and theses, and the full costs of the regional collaborative components of the programme. During an initial phase, lasting five years, the AERC will provide modest subsidies to Category B universities to cover a portion of the costs of their masters programmes. The AERC expects to phase out these subsidies as local support increases. The AERC will cover the costs of the joint components of the programme over a longer period.

Grants

The AERC will provide two types of grants to Category B universities: start-up grants in the first year of Category B status and annual operating grants to cover part of the recurrent costs of their masters programmes. These funds are not to be used to support undergraduate programmes. Grants will go directly to participating departments of economics, and senior university officials in the region have indicated that they will not charge an administrative overhead. Departments receiving grants will be expected to provide financial reports on the use of these funds at the end of each academic year, prior to the disbursement of any grant for the following academic year.

The ceiling for start-up grants to Category B universities will be \$80,000. These grants can be used by departments of economics to meet priority needs at the outset of the programme. They would typically be used to purchase equipment, for example a departmental vehicle (for field research), computers and printers, a photocopier and other office equipment, and furniture. Funds might also be used to restock a departmental library with new books, or to refurbish infrastructure, such as a library or seminar room. Though departments of economics seeking start-up grants will be expected to draft a budget for the use of these funds, they will have full discretion to allocate funds within the \$80,000 ceiling to meet their priority needs.

The annual operating grants will provide a partial subsidy for the recurrent costs of the Category B departments' masters programmes. They will have two components:

a subsidy for the first academic year (of the 18-24 month masters cycle) and, in the second academic year, support for theses. The value of both grants will be related to the size of enrolment in the respective year of the masters programme. Since departments will be submitting their operational plans several months in advance of the following academic year, their proposed budgets will be based on projections of student numbers, rather than confirmed enrolment. Minor adjustments in grant size may therefore be made at the start of the academic year. Provisions may also be made to "credit" or "debit" the department at the end of the academic year for its grant in the following year.

For the first component, the ceiling for support will be \$6,000 per student enrolled in the first year of the masters programme, or \$9,000 for each AERC scholarship holder enrolled. The higher grant for receiving these scholarship holders from universities or countries without masters programmes in economics is intended to encourage Category B departments to provide more places for them than their minimum required allocation of one to two places (see page 29). Departments are expected to negotiate with the university authorities for the waiver of all fees for these scholarship holders, or alternatively to pay these fees in full from their operational subsidies.

A condition for Category B status is that a department has sufficient teaching resources to sustain a credible masters programme in addition to a sound undergraduate programme. The operational grants are therefore not large enough to make up for serious shortfalls in the cadre of academic staff. The grants can, however, be used to meet specific teaching gaps at the masters level, notably through the hiring of part-time

teachers. In certain cases, part of the grant might be used to enable a lecturer from another African university to spend part of a sabbatical year teaching in the department's masters programme. Other typical uses for the operational grant would be the purchase of books, journal subscriptions and consumables, the maintenance of equipment and the hiring of departmental support staff.

From 1993/94, the operational grants can include a second component for theses. These will provide \$6,000 per second year student who has passed the core course and JFE examinations. As noted above (page 14), the thesis grant may also be provided in special cases, at the department head's discretion, for students who passed the core course examinations but had to postpone attendance at the JFE until the end of their second year. This support may be used to provide research grants to students for fieldwork, data processing and other research costs, and to meet related departmental costs such as local supervision and the cost of communications with an external supervisor and/or an external examiner. The AERC will pay directly the fees of external examiners and, where desired, external supervisors.

Scholarships

The amount of scholarship awards will be determined on the basis of the receiving university's official recommended minimum subsistence for foreign students - or, in the case of students from Category A universities enrolling in Category B universities in the

same country, the receiving university's standard stipend for masters students. In addition, the AERC Secretariat will arrange and pay for travel to the receiving university.

Collaborative components of the programme

The costs of the collaborative components of the programme will be paid in full by the AERC. These include the following items:

- programme management, including the operating and equipment costs of the AERC Secretariat, and meetings of the Academic Board, the Executive Committee, and the Committee on Programme Evaluation;
- the meetings of the Committee on Core Courses, curriculum working groups, workshops, and the development of course materials;
- all costs relating to the JFE electives, including meetings of the Committee on Electives, course design, the transportation, board and lodging of students and teachers participating in the JFE, and external examiners;
- fees to external supervisors for theses;
- the costs of programme evaluation, including meetings of the Committee on Programme Evaluation and external examiners for the core courses, electives and theses;
- scholarships for students nominated by Category A universities to enrol

in the masters programmes of Category B universities, and meetings of the Committee on Scholarships and Placement.